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BLACK PANTHER

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THROUGH WALLS OF STONE THEY STALK!

BEWARE... THE AGENTS OF KIBER!

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With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY JACK KIRBY • EMBELLISHED BY MIKE ROYER • COLORED BY PETRA GOLDBERG • JIM SHOOTER CONSULTING EDITOR

HIS MENTAL AWARENESS HEIGHTENED BY VIBRANIUM EXPOSURE, T'CHALLA MUST REACH INTO LIMBO ITSELF TO TRACK DOWN THE ABDUCTORS OF ONE OF HIS KIN. IT IS A TIME TO CHALLENGE THE UNKNOWN--TO DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE--AND FIND THE ANSWER TO--
THE KIBER CLUE
WE'VE MADE MENTAL CONTACT, KHANATA! YOU MUST FORGET YOUR FEAR AND THINK CLEARLY!
DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE?
THERE'S NO WAY TO TELL!
HELP ME, T'CHALLA! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE HERE!

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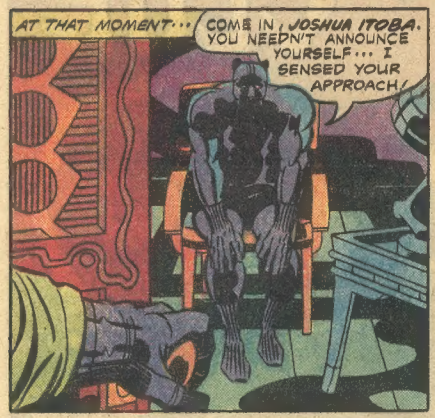
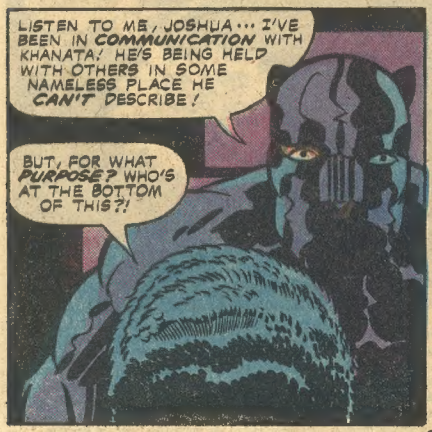
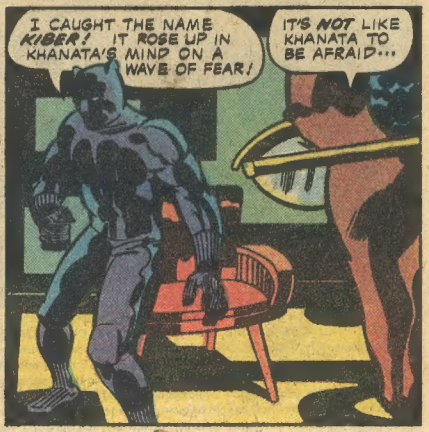
BE CALM··· LET ME ABSORB THE FEW FACTS YOU'VE GIVEN ME.
YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

I'LL TRY, KHANATA! SOMEHOW I'LL PUT THIS PUZZLE TOGETHER AND COME FOR YOU! KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP!
BE QUICK, GREAT PANTHER! IT MAY SOON BE MY TURN TO DIE!


AT THAT MOMENT···
COME IN, JOSHUA ITOBA. YOU NEEDN'T ANNOUNCE YOURSELF··· I SENSED YOUR APPROACH!

I'VE BEEN LETTING MY THOUGHTS RUN FREE IN THE DARKNESS···
YOU MUST LIMIT THESE EXERCISES. IT'S TIME TO REST.


LISTEN TO ME, JOSHUA··· I'VE BEEN IN COMMUNICATION WITH KHANATA! HE'S BEING HELD WITH OTHERS IN SOME NAMELESS PLACE HE CAN'T DESCRIBE!
BUT, FOR WHAT PURPOSE? WHO'S AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS?!


I CAUGHT THE NAME KIBER! IT ROSE UP IN KHANATA'S MIND ON A WAVE OF FEAR!
IT'S NOT LIKE KHANATA TO BE AFRAID···

IF THIS KIBER CAN MAKE BRAVE MEN TREMBLE, HE'S SOMEONE TO BE RECKONED WITH!
POOR KHANATA! I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY KIBER CHOSE *HIM* FOR ABDUCTION!

HE'S A *LIKEABLE*, FOOTLOOSE, FAST-CAR ENTHUSIAST! I *DIDN'T* THINK HE HAD AN ENEMY IN THE WORLD!
HE HAS *NOW*... AND FROM WHAT I SENSED, HE'S FACING SOME SORT OF DANGER TOO *HORRIBLE* TO TALK ABOUT!

WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT *ALL* WE CAN ABOUT KIBER! *EVERY* RESOURCE OF THE PANTHER CULT MUST BE PUT TO THAT TASK!
IT SEEMS STRANGE, T'CHALLA, BUT THAT NAME SOMEHOW STRIKES A FAMILIAR NOTE! BUT, AT THIS MOMENT, I CAN'T ASSOCIATE IT WITH ANY DEFINITE FACT!

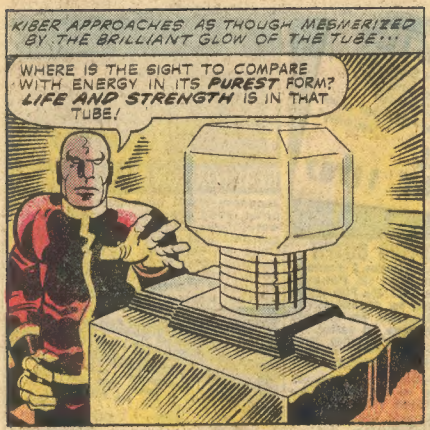
MEANWHILE, IN KIBER'S LAIR...
TAKE IT *EASY*, FELLA! YELLIN'S *NOT* GONNA CHANGE THINGS!
T'CHALLA WAS *HERE*, I TELL YOU! BUT THERE WAS *NO* WAY HE COULD HELP US!
SURE! SURE! SOONER OR LATER WE ALL GET TO HEAR *VOICES* IN OUR *HEADS*!

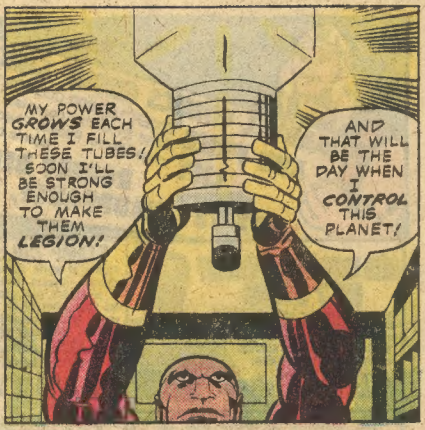
BUT, YOU'VE GOT TO GET A *GRIP* ON YOURSELF! WE'RE IN A *BAD* FIX!
HE'LL FIND US! HE'LL GET US OUT OF THIS PLACE! WE'VE GOT A CHANCE NOW!
QUIET! THOSE CRUMMY GUARDS WILL HEAR YOU!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

THERE IS PANIC AMONG THE CAPTIVES AS KIBER'S GUARDS CLOSE IN···
NO! NO! NOT ME!
GO AHEAD, YOU MUSCLE-BOUND WEIRDOS! A RULING PANTHER WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO DIE!!
THEY'RE GONNA MAKE THEIR MOVE! I CAN TELL!
SUDDENLY···
LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
HELP ME!
TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HIM!
KRAK!
FOOL! YOU KNOW IT'S USELESS TO TRY TO STOP THEM! THEY'RE TOO STRONG!
GIVE THANKS THAT THEY DIDN'T TAKE YOU!
BUT WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO STOP IT!

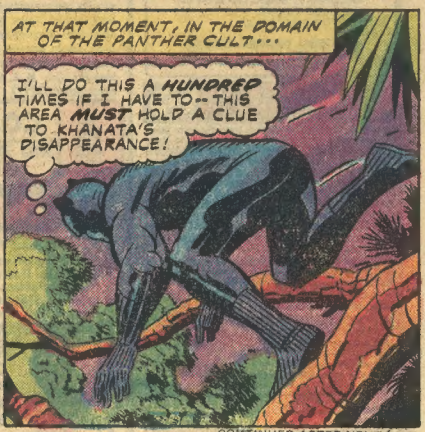
SUBJECT IS IN THE CONVERSION CHAMBER! PREPARE TO SHUT IT!
DON'T LET THEM DO THIS TO ME! IT'S INHUMAN!
CLANG!!
CHAMBER CLOSED!
STAND CLEAR! THOSE WHO ARE TOO SLOW TO AVOID THE POWER BACKLASH WILL SHATTER LIKE EGGS!
A MOMENT LATER...
WUTZOOM!
AND SO, IT'S DONE ONCE MORE! A WASTEFUL UNIT OF NON-PRODUCTIVE MASS HAS BEEN CONVERTED INTO GLORIOUS ENERGY!
OPEN THE CHAMBER DOOR AND LET THE EXCESS MATTER DRIFT AWAY!
IT'S DONE, KIBER. THE ENERGY TUBE IS READY FOR REMOVAL!


KIBER APPROACHES AS THOUGH MESMERIZED BY THE BRILLIANT GLOW OF THE TUBE...
WHERE IS THE SIGHT TO COMPARE WITH ENERGY IN ITS PUREST FORM? LIFE AND STRENGTH IS IN THAT TUBE!


MY POWER GROWS EACH TIME I FILL THESE TUBES! SOON I'LL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM LEGION!
AND THAT WILL BE THE DAY WHEN I CONTROL THIS PLANET!

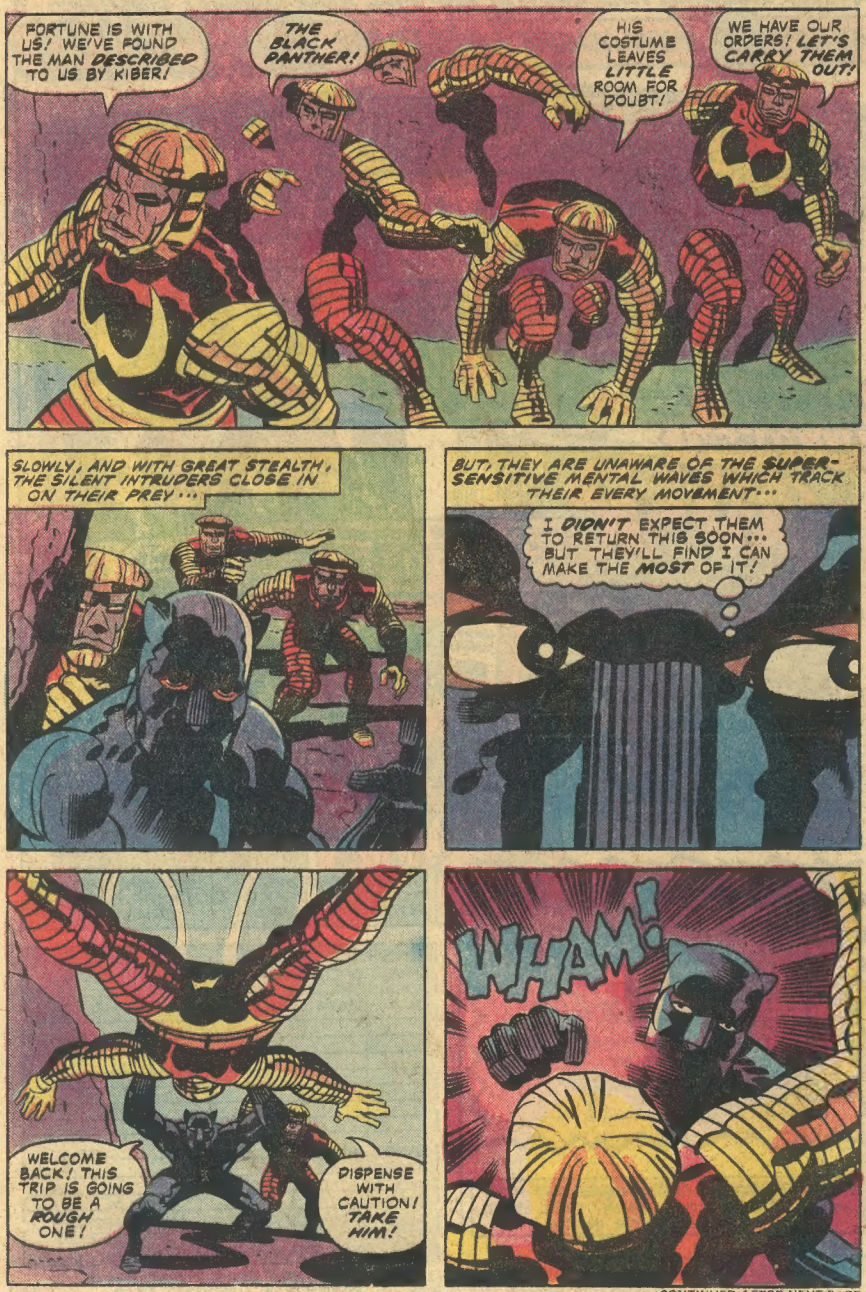
THERE ARE SOME MEN WHO CAN THROW A LONG SHADOW OVER YOUR MAD DREAM! ONE OF THEM IS OF MY OWN FAMILY --A GIANT IN BODY AND SPIRIT!
YOU'VE AROUSED MY INTEREST! THIS MAN--HE MUST BE EXTRAORDINARY INDEED!

WELL, JUST KEEP HIM IN MIND! BECAUSE T'CHALLA WILL BE HERE SOON --TO PULL THIS PLACE DOWN UPON YOUR HEAD!
BRAVO! I MUST SEE THIS MAN! SUCH POWER MUST NOT BE WASTED ON UNCLEAN MATTER!


AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE DOMAIN OF THE PANTHER CULT...
I'LL DO THIS A HUNDRED TIMES IF I HAVE TO-- THIS AREA MUST HOLD A CLUE TO KHANATA'S DISAPPEARANCE!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

NOTHING···NOT ONE FOOTPRINT OR BROKEN BRANCH!
THE CONCLUSION IS EVER THE SAME. KHANATA WAS TAKEN AT THE BASE OF PANTHER MOUNTAIN!
--AND HERE AMONG THESE ROCKS HE VANISHED WITH HIS ABDUCTORS!
THEY COULDN'T HAVE USED A PLANE OR HELICOPTER. THIS LAND IS SURROUNDED BY HIDDEN SENSORS THAT COULD PICK UP THE MOVEMENTS OF AN INTRUDING GRASSHOPPER!
DO I DARE VOICE WHAT MY MIND TELLS ME IS THE TRUTH?
THEY CAME AND LEFT-- THROUGH THE ROCK!!
IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER EXPLANATION!
WITH THIS POWER AT THEIR COMMAND THERE'S NO BARRIER ON EARTH THAT CAN STOP THEM!
THEY'LL COME AGAIN! AND WHEN THEY DO, I MUST BE READY FOR THEM! FOR ONLY THEY CAN LEAD ME TO KHANATA!


FORTUNE IS WITH US! WE'VE FOUND THE MAN DESCRIBED TO US BY KIBER!
THE BLACK PANTHER!
HIS COSTUME LEAVES LITTLE ROOM FOR DOUBT!
WE HAVE OUR ORDERS! LET'S CARRY THEM OUT!
SLOWLY, AND WITH GREAT STEALTH, THE SILENT INTRUDERS CLOSE IN ON THEIR PREY...
BUT, THEY ARE UNAWARE OF THE SUPER-SENSITIVE MENTAL WAVES WHICH TRACK THEIR EVERY MOVEMENT...
I DIDN'T EXPECT THEM TO RETURN THIS SOON... BUT THEY'LL FIND I CAN MAKE THE MOST OF IT!
WELCOME BACK! THIS TRIP IS GOING TO BE A ROUGH ONE!
DISPENSE WITH CAUTION! TAKE HIM!
WHAM!

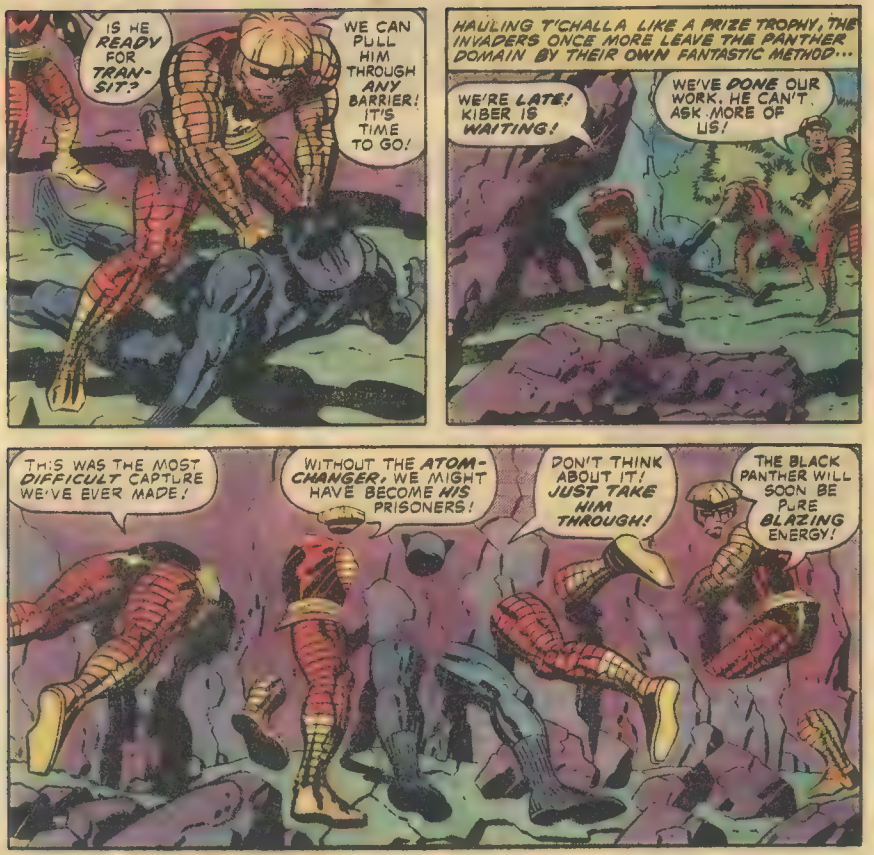
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

WE'VE GOT TO CAPTURE HIM! HE'S A VERITABLE STORE HOUSE OF BRUTE POWER! --PERFECT FOR KIBER'S NEEDS!
KIBER WILL GET HIS TASTE OF IT WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH YOU, CARRION!

BLAAAMM!
LIKE THIS SAMPLE?

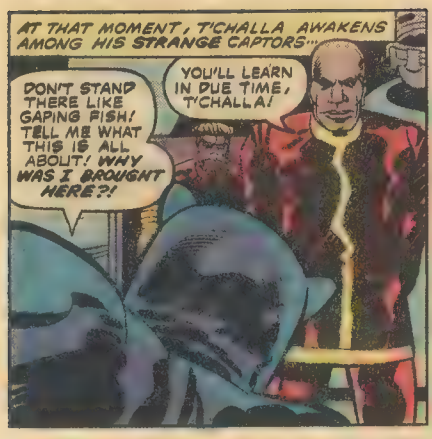
YOU'LL COME WITH US BY ONE MEANS OR ANOTHER! WHAT KIBER ORDERS, WE DELIVER!

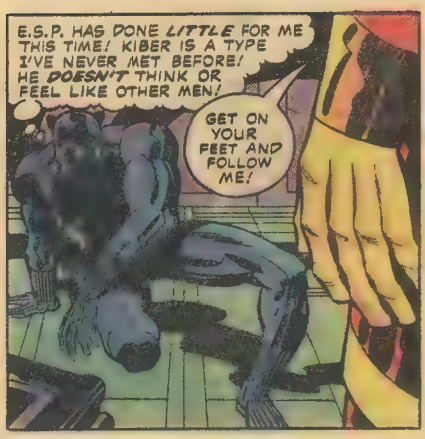
IF WE CAN'T CRUSH YOUR SPIRIT, WE CAN CHANGE YOUR ATOMIC STRUCTURE!
ZZZZTCH!
CAREFUL! THE SHOCK CAN EASILY KILL HIS KIND!


IS HE READY FOR TRANSIT?
WE CAN PULL HIM THROUGH ANY BARRIER! IT'S TIME TO GO!
HAULING T'CHALLA LIKE A PRIZE TROPHY, THE INVADERS ONCE MORE LEAVE THE PANTHER DOMAIN BY THEIR OWN FANTASTIC METHOD...
WE'RE LATE! KIBER IS WAITING!
WE'VE DONE OUR WORK. HE CAN'T ASK MORE OF US!
THIS WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT CAPTURE WE'VE EVER MADE!
WITHOUT THE ATOM-CHANGER, WE MIGHT HAVE BECOME HIS PRISONERS!
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT! JUST TAKE HIM THROUGH!
THE BLACK PANTHER WILL SOON BE PURE BLAZING ENERGY!
MEANWHILE...
DON'T DISTURB ME, N'GASS., IF YOU BEAR NO NEWS!
I BRING YOU NEWS... BOTH GOOD AND BAD, JOSHUA ITOBA!
WELL THEN, I MUST KNOW ABOUT KIBER FIRST! HAVE OUR INFORMATION SOURCES GIVEN US ANY DETAILS ABOUT THAT?
THEY'VE BEEN VERY THOROUGH! HE'S NO LONGER A MYSTERY!

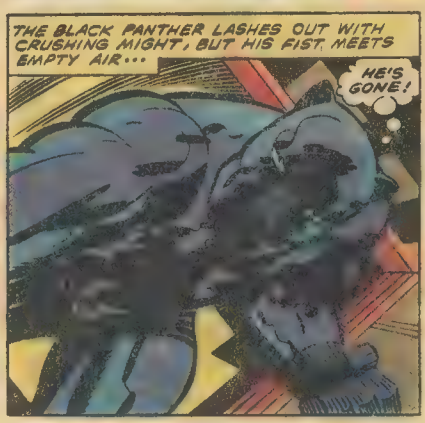
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

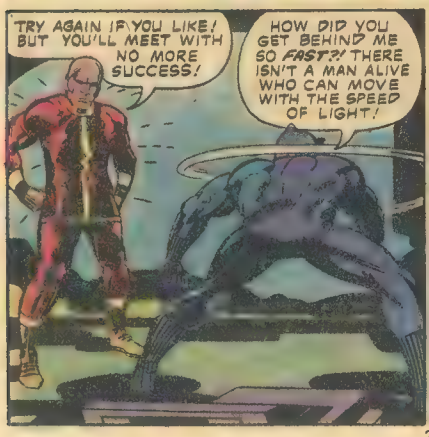
BY THE GREAT PANTHER'S SPIRIT! NOW I KNOW WHY KIBER'S NAME WAS FAMILIAR TO ME! I'VE SEEN IT IN SCIENCE JOURNALS!
FOR A TIME HE WAS THE SUBJECT OF WIDESPREAD CONTROVERSY-- THEN HE SEEMS TO HAVE FADED FROM SIGHT!
I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY! WOULD YOU BELIEVE THE FAR-OUT WORK HE WAS INVOLVED IN??
WHY NOT? KIBER WAS CONSIDERED A GREAT MIND!
"I'LL MAKE THE MATTER TRANSMITTER A REALITY"
THIS IS THE QUOTE THAT STIRRED A FUROR AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THIS YEAR'S SCIENCE CONGRESS
FREDERICK KIBER
HAS HE MASTERED SECRETS OF THE ATOM??
THE MANY CLAIMS OF
WHAT'S MORE, I BELIEVE THAT HIS MATTER-MACHINE IS ACTUALLY IN OPERATION! IT REACHED INTO THIS DOMAIN--AND TOOK KHANATA!
OF COURSE! THERE'S NO OTHER WAY IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED!
YOU'VE DONE WELL, N'GASSI! THIS INFORMATION MUST BE GIVEN TO T'CHALLA AT ONCE!
I THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE I CAME TO YOU-- BUT HE WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND!
YOU SEE, JOSHUA, THAT'S THE BAD NEWS. T'CHALLA HAS VANISHED IN THE SAME MANNER AS KHANATA. THERE'S NOT A TRACE OF HIM ANYWHERE!
T-THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NOT THE BLACK PANTHER!
DON'T BE ALARMED! THIS COULD TURN TO OUR ADVANTAGE! IN CONFUSING A PANTHER WITH A GUINEA PIG, KIBER MAY HAVE MADE A FATAL ERROR!
T'CHALLA IS CERTAIN TO COMMUNICATE WITH US! BY MENTAL CONTACT WE'LL LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP HIM!

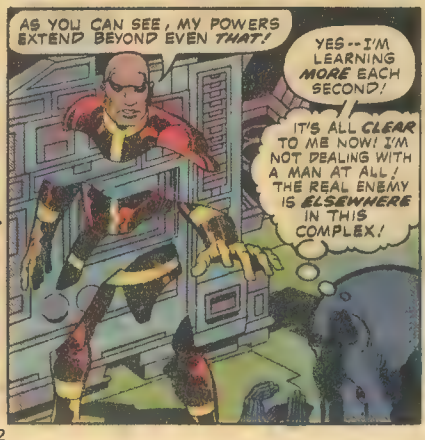

AT THAT MOMENT, T'CHALLA AWAKENS AMONG HIS STRANGE CAPTORS...
DON'T STAND THERE LIKE GAPING FISH! TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT! WHY WAS I BROUGHT HERE?!
YOU'LL LEARN IN DUE TIME, T'CHALLA!


E.S.P. HAS DONE LITTLE FOR ME THIS TIME! KIBER IS A TYPE I'VE NEVER MET BEFORE! HE DOESN'T THINK OR FEEL LIKE OTHER MEN!
GET ON YOUR FEET AND FOLLOW ME!

CHECK YOUR HOSTILITY! TO ATTACK ME IS A FUTILE EFFORT!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! YOU LOOK LIKE A MAN WITH A GLASS JAW!


THE BLACK PANTHER LASHES OUT WITH CRUSHING MIGHT, BUT HIS FIST MEETS EMPTY AIR...
HE'S GONE!


TRY AGAIN IF YOU LIKE! BUT YOU'LL MEET WITH NO MORE SUCCESS!
HOW DID YOU GET BEHIND ME SO FAST?! THERE ISN'T A MAN ALIVE WHO CAN MOVE WITH THE SPEED OF LIGHT!


AS YOU CAN SEE, MY POWERS EXTEND BEYOND EVEN THAT!
YES--I'M LEARNING MORE EACH SECOND!
IT'S ALL CLEAR TO ME NOW! I'M NOT DEALING WITH A MAN AT ALL! THE REAL ENEMY IS ELSEWHERE IN THIS COMPLEX!

YOU'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO MY BIDDING, T'CHALLA! RESIGN YOURSELF TO THAT!
I'LL KEEP MY TEMPER FOR THE PRESENT! NOW, LET ME SEE THE KIND OF SHOW YOU'RE RUNNING!
EASILY DONE! IT'S ALL IN THERE!
IS THAT CABINET WITH THE TUBE ON TOP THE MAIN FEATURE ON YOUR PROGRAM?
IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING --IT IS THE PROGRAM!
AND YOU, T'CHALLA, SHALL BE THE MOST SPECTACULAR FEATURE WE'VE HAD HERE!
IT'S TIME TO ACT, BUT I NEED SOME KIND OF DIVERSION···
T'CHALLA! T'CHALLA!!
HERE I AM, GREAT PANTHER! TRAPPED IN THIS PIGPEN!
SO··· THAT'S YOUR BIG HERO, IS IT?
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN AS MUCH TROUBLE AS WE ARE!
AT THAT MOMENT, T'CHALLA BEAMS A MIND-WAVE AT HIS COUSIN···
KHANATA! GET THOSE MEN TO BREAK OUT OF THERE!
YOU CAN DO IT! YOU MUST DO IT!
HE'S LOOKING STRAIGHT AT US, BUT HE'S DOING NOTHING TO HELP!
I'VE JUST RECEIVED HIS THOUGHTS!
HE WANTS US TO BREAK OUT!
NO CHANCE!

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YOUR SUPER-PANTHER IS NOTHING BUT A PAPER POODLE! HE'S SUPPOSED TO HELP US--NOT VICE-VERSA!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HELPING EACH OTHER? I DON'T KNOW WHAT T'CHALLA'S PLAN IS, BUT IT COULD MEAN AN END TO KIBER!
I JUST WANT TO GET OUT!
THEN, LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!! WE CAN ALL GET OUT IF WE ACT AS ONE INSTEAD OF DYING SEPARATELY!
IF KIBER'S GUARDS DON'T KILL US, HIS WEAPONS WILL!
YOU KNOW IT, BROTHER!
IF YOU AND THIS T'CHALLA WANT TO PLAY WAR GAMES, GO RIGHT AHEAD!
ALL RIGHT, THEN! SLINK OFF TO YOUR CORNERS AND WAIT FOR THE GUARDS TO COME--AND ONE BY ONE YOU'LL VANISH INTO THAT IRON BOX AND COME OUT AS CHEAP VOLTAGE!
WE'RE NOTHING BUT FUEL TO KIBER! WHEN HE'S THROUGH WITH US HE'LL CAPTURE OTHERS UNTIL HE DESTROYS HUMANITY!
MUST WE LET HIM DO IT WITHOUT A FIGHT? MUST WE GO TO OUR DEATHS LIKE SHEEP?
SUDDENLY...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!!
POW!
CRAASH!
BAM!

SECONDS LATER, THE CAPTIVES BURST FREE...
OUT OF MY WAY!
STOP THEM!
THAT'S MY CUE! I'M LEAVING YOU HYENAS!
KRAK!
SMASH!
THE REAL KIBER IS THE KEY TO THIS MAD SET-UP! WHAT I MET WAS JUST A PROJECTED IMAGE MADE UP OF ASSORTED ATOM CLUSTERS!
COME BACK! THIS PASSAGE IS FORBIDDEN TO ALL!
YOU'LL DIE FOR THIS!
I'LL TAKE THAT RISK!

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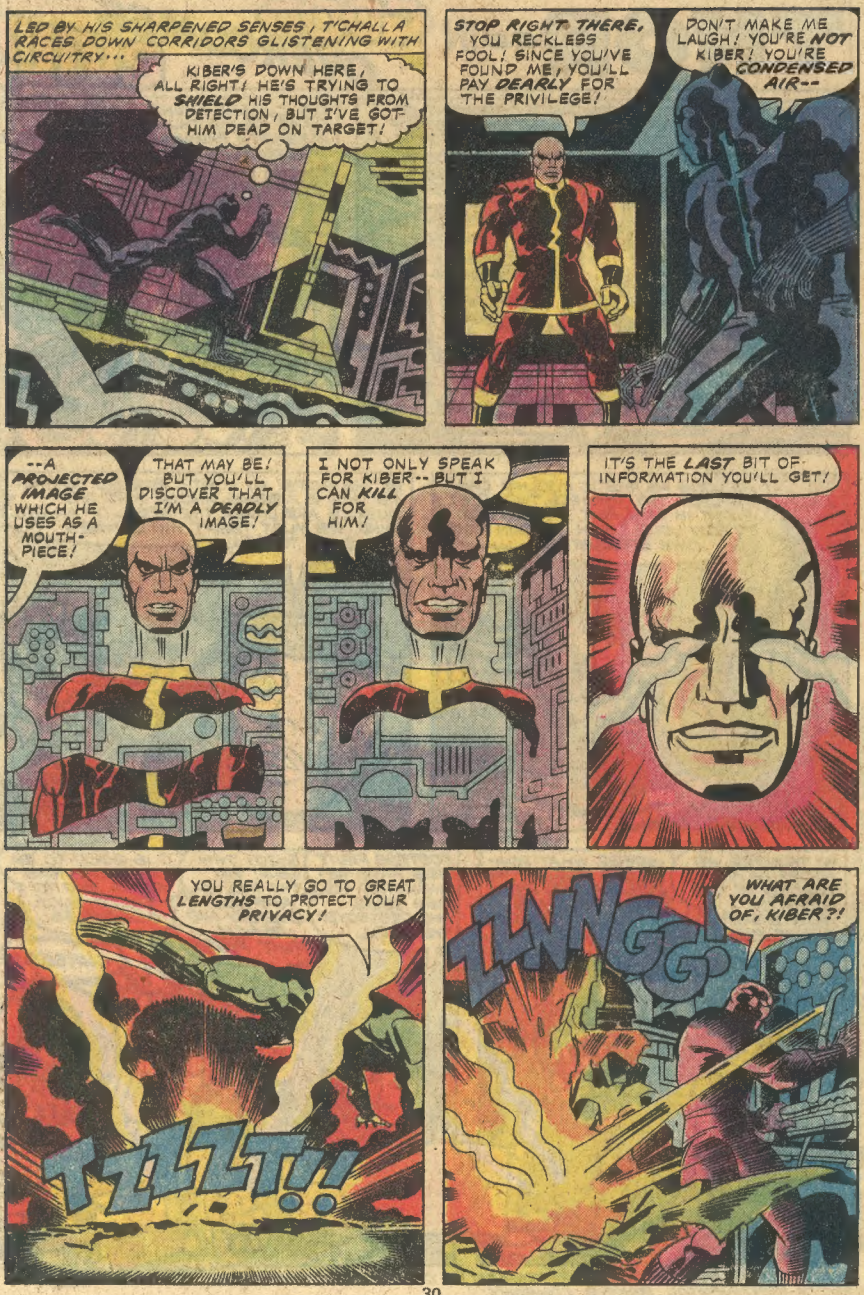
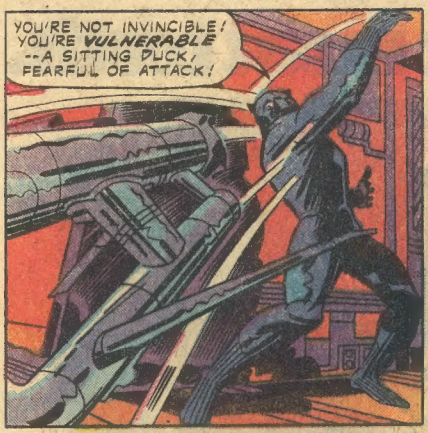
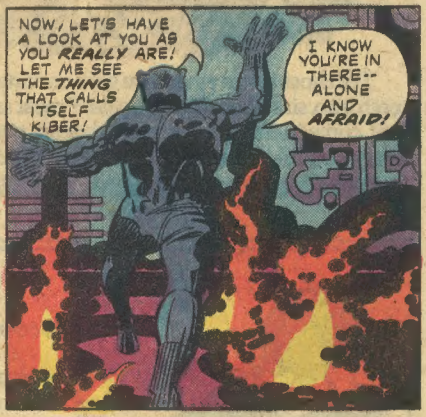

LED BY HIS SHARPENED SENSES, T'CHALLA RACES DOWN CORRIDORS GLISTENING WITH CIRCUITRY...
KIBER'S DOWN HERE, ALL RIGHT! HE'S TRYING TO SHIELD HIS THOUGHTS FROM DETECTION, BUT I'VE GOT HIM DEAD ON TARGET!
STOP RIGHT THERE, YOU RECKLESS FOOL! SINCE YOU'VE FOUND ME, YOU'LL PAY DEARLY FOR THE PRIVILEGE!
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! YOU'RE NOT KIBER! YOU'RE CONDENSED AIR--
--A PROJECTED IMAGE WHICH HE USES AS A MOUTH-PIECE!
THAT MAY BE! BUT YOU'LL DISCOVER THAT I'M A DEADLY IMAGE!
I NOT ONLY SPEAK FOR KIBER-- BUT I CAN KILL FOR HIM!
IT'S THE LAST BIT OF INFORMATION YOU'LL GET!
YOU REALLY GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY!
TZZZT!!
ZLNNGG!
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF, KIBER?!


YOU'RE NOT INVINCIBLE! YOU'RE VULNERABLE --A SITTING DUCK, FEARFUL OF ATTACK!

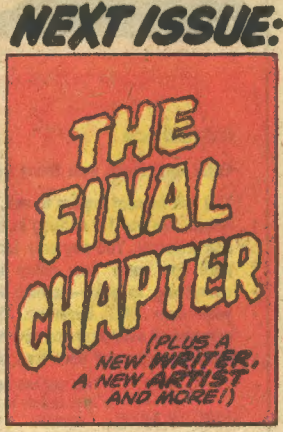
EVEN YOUR IMAGE CAN BE SHORTED OUT BY CONTACT WITH IRON!
TSSSST!!

SO MUCH FOR YOUR IMPRESSIVE FACADE OF ATOMIC GIMMICKRY!


NOW, LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT YOU AS YOU REALLY ARE! LET ME SEE THE THING THAT CALLS ITSELF KIBER!
I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE-- ALONE AND AFRAID!

YOU'RE AFRAID BECAUSE YOU'RE BIG AND CLUMSY --AND YOU CAN'T MOVE-- YOU'RE ANCHORED TO THE GROUND!
RRRRRRRR

I'VE GOT YOU-- KIBER!!


NEXT ISSUE:
THE FINAL CHAPTER
(PLUS A NEW WRITER, A NEW ARTIST AND MORE!)

BLACK PANTHER

scanned by *Wizard*